Label-free Bare Phrase Structure
Some consequences for Hale & Keyser's lexical-syntax

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In this talk I discuss Hale & Keyser's (1993 and subseq.) hypothesis that the limits of argument structure follow from restrictions on X-bar templates –i.e. from *unambiguous projection* of complements and specifiers– in the context of Chomsky's *Bare Phrase Structure* (BPS).

With Boeckx (2008a), I assume that Chomsky's BPS makes HK's pivotal claim virtually unstateable, a situation compounded by the lack of consensus about how to formulate the 'bare' theory. Here I want to develop the Boeckx–Chomsky label-free approach to BPS, where labels are not actually created/projected, but identified by minimal search (a third-factor metric), as shown by the algorithms below.

(1) Labelling algorithms
a. $\{H, \alpha\}$, H an LI, H is the label
b. If α is internally merged to β, forming $\{\alpha, \beta\}$ then the label of β is the label of $\{\alpha, \beta\}$

[from Chomsky 2008:11]

The label-free formulation above adopts the main insight of Collins' (2002) (iff *label* = Chomsky's *probe* = Collin's *locus*), though couched within a phase-cycle system where labels (like everything else; e.g. minimality) are identified at the phase-level, after the derivation has unfolded a bit. Assuming this conception, I take (2) to be a consequence of the weakly derivational nature of Chomsky's *Phase Theory*.

(2) Phase level labelling
    The label of K is decided at the phase level

The presentation explores Boeckx–Chomsky's proposal in the context of HK's framework, and its consequences for their *l-syntax* vs. *s-syntax* cut, a distinction that presupposes a D-structure *level of representation* (or *component*, see Uriagereka 2008).

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